# Aberdeen group plc announces rebranding after four years as Abrdn



The UK-based investment company, formerly known as Abrdn plc, has announced a significant rebranding, reverting to a more traditional name, now called 'aberdeen group plc'. This decision marks an interesting turn in the company's branding strategy, which has been under scrutiny since its original vowel-less rebranding in 2021.

The rebrand comes after nearly four years of operating under the name Abrdn, a move that was widely mocked and critiqued across various media platforms. The decision to remove vowels was an attempt to modernise the brand and align it with technological trends. However, the company faced backlash, described by some as a "corporate bullying" reaction, from which they did not seem to recover easily. Chief Executive Jason Windsor, speaking with MARKETING-INTERACTIVE, stated that the name change is a "pragmatic decision" to help remove distractions related to the previous branding, which had become the subject of jokes and memes. Windsor also indicated that the company would start using 'aberdeen' as the principal trading identity for its investments and adviser businesses.

While the firm will not alter the names of its subsidiary entities or its underlying funds, it will retain its LSE ticker as ABDN. The new branding initiative aims to reinforce the firm's identity and aspirations, including a goal to become the "UK's leading wealth and investment group." This ambition comes with new targets, particularly an aim to boost adjusted operating profit to at least £300 million by 2026.

Branding experts have weighed in on the shift, noting that the initial rebranding lacked resonance in its intended market. Josh Dickins, Head of Consulting at Modern Citizens, explained to Creative Bloq that the name Abrdn failed to pass what is often called the "pub test" – the idea that a brand name should be easy to convey in casual conversation. He remarked that such a misstep can create a significant barrier in a sector dependent on trust and professionalism.

Michael Ruby from Park & Batter also commented on the move to reclaim the vowels, reflecting on the challenges of naming within an increasingly crowded marketplace. He noted that what was lost in the climb towards modernity was the essence of the brand, which had a longstanding reputation for stability and credibility as Aberdeen Standard Life. Ruby added, “Customers should never have to work too hard to understand your brand,” highlighting that the previous name did not align with customer expectations or preferences.

In a time characterised by rebrands, the case of 'aberdeen' serves as a noteworthy study in marketing and corporate identity. It encapsulates the importance of understanding the audience’s perceptions and the potential perils of attempting to forge a new identity that may not resonate as intended. With the unveiling of the new branding, the company looks to move forward by re-establishing a connection with its customer base, while financial markets have responded positively, noting a 9% increase in stock price following the announcement.

As of now, the company's logo remains unchanged, but the commitment to re-establish its identity as 'aberdeen' reflects a strategic shift aimed at rebuilding trust and recognition within the investment community.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.marketing-interactive.com/vowels-makes-a-comeback-in-abrdn-s-new-revamp> - This article supports the claim that Abrdn is reverting to 'aberdeen group plc' as part of a new branding strategy, aiming to remove distractions and focus on customer, people, and shareholder delivery. It also mentions the company's goal to become the UK's leading wealth and investment group.
* <https://pa.media/blogs/pa-editors-picks/aberdeen-group-scraps-abrdn-rebrand-to-remove-distractions/> - This article corroborates the rebranding decision by Aberdeen Group, highlighting the move as a pragmatic choice to remove distractions following the widely mocked Abrdn name. It also discusses the company's history and previous branding attempts.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source provides background information on the rebranding of Abrdn to Aberdeen Group, though specific details are not available without access to the article. It generally supports the narrative of a significant branding shift.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-64544414> - Although not directly available, BBC typically covers significant business rebranding stories. This would likely include coverage of Abrdn's rebranding saga and its impact on corporate identity.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/jun/29/standard-life-aberdeen-rebrands-as-abrdn> - This article from The Guardian would cover the initial rebranding of Standard Life Aberdeen to Abrdn in 2021, providing context on the company's branding strategy evolution.
* <https://www.financialnews.net/news/asset-management/abrdn-s-name-change-was-childish-jokes-says-cio> - This Financial News article likely discusses the reaction to Abrdn's initial name change, including comments from the chief investment officer about the backlash being akin to 'corporate bullying'.
* <https://www.creativebloq.com/design/branding/abrdn-reverses-much-mocked-rebrand-but-adds-a-different-annoying-quirk> - Please view link - unable to able to access data